



GUIYANG: EXPANDING OVER THE MOUNTAINS

贵阳



GUIYANG: BASIC INFORMATION		World Rank	Similar To
Urban Area Population (2010)	2,440,000	152	Sapporo, Lisbon, Tampa-St. Petersburg
Projection (2025)	3,300,000	147	Busan, Izmir, Kampala
Urban Land Area: Square Miles	80	361	Newcastle on Tyne, London (Ontario), Dakar
Urban Land Area: Square Kilometers	210		
Density: Per Square Mile ¹	29,700	123	Pune, Rabat, Lima
Density: Per Square Kilometer	11,500		
*Continuously built up area (Urban agglomeration) Land area & density rankings among the approximately 800 urban areas with 500,000+ population. Data from <i>Demographia World Urban Areas</i> (http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf)			

28 March 2010

Basics

Guiyang is the capital of Guizhou province, located to the south of Sichuan, to the west of Yunnan. Guiyang is at an elevation of approximately 3500 feet elevation (1100 meters). It is located approximately 1000 to 1100 miles from (1600 to 1800 kilometers) from Shanghai and Beijing and 500 miles (800 miles) from Guangzhou.

The Urban Form

Guiyang is the highest density urban area with more than 1,500,000 population in China (with the exception of Hong Kong). With a density of 29,700 per square mile (11,500 per square kilometer), Guiyang is 40% more dense than the average Chinese urban area of more than 1,500,000.

¹ Density is calculated using the mid-point population between a base year estimate and the latest estimate as projected from the base year. See [Demographia World Urban Areas](http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf).

The largest part of the Guiyang urban area is located at the north end of a valley and is enclosed on three sides (west, north and east) by mountains. In this regard, the physical setting is similar to that of Taiyuan (Shanxi). The central business district is somewhat compact, with a number of buildings reaching over 40 floors. The tallest building is the Kepinski Hotel, which is nearly 60 floors (Slides 43 & 53). The picturesque Nanming River traverses the southern part of the central business district (Slides 39 & 45). The river borders the People's Park, which contains a Wal-Mart supercenter (Slides 40 & 42).

There are also large office buildings and hotels well outside the central business district, especially to the north, near the mountains and to the south. This is typical of many Asian urban areas. The railway station is located in the southern sector (Slide 58).

The main part of Guiyang is very dense, averaging approximately 50,000 per square mile (20,000 per square kilometer). Densities are substantially lower in the rest of the urban area.

Guiyang has substantial plans for expansion. New towns are being developed over the mountains to both the northwest and the northeast ((Slide 70), as well as in the airport area, to the east. Eventually, the Guiyang urban area will double in size from its expanse in 1995.

Transportation

Guiyang has a modern, high capacity grid street system. However, because of Guiyang's high core density, traffic volumes are among the most intense in China.

The international airport is located on the east side of the urban area. There are peaks near the airport which appear similar to the karst peaks of the Li River in Guangxi province (south of Guizhou).

Residential Development

There is somewhat limited development of the large, high-rise luxury condominium and apartment projects that are typical of Chengdu, Chongqing, Xi'an and the east coast urban areas. Most of the residential buildings are the typical "bay window" mid-rise buildings that proliferate throughout China (Slides 17, 21, 22, 33, 55, 61 & 62)

Cities in China ([Urban Definitions](#))

Analysts are often confused by the "city" terminology used in China. No "city" illustrates this more than the municipality of Chongqing, by virtue of its overwhelming size and population, the vast majority of which is rural (not urban). Cities in China are regions.

The following, from our article in *NewGeography.com* elaborates on the term "city" and misunderstandings surrounding it (Source: <http://www.newgeography.com/content/001076-on-cities-ghg-emissions-apples-oranges>).

Whenever someone starts talking about "cities," it is best to ask what they mean. The word "cities" has so many meanings and is subject to such confusion that I generally avoid using it.

"Cities" might be municipalities, such as the city of [New York](#) or the ville de Paris.

Cities could be urban areas (urbanized areas or urban agglomerations), which are the urban footprints one observes from an airplane on a clear night.

- *“Cities” could be metropolitan areas, which are labor markets and are generally larger than urban areas, because people commute from rural areas (outside the urban footprint) to work in the urban area.*
- *In nearly the entire world, with the exception of China, urban areas and metropolitan areas are larger than municipalities.*

Or, “cities” could be used in the sense of Chinese prefectural, sub-provincial or provincial level cities, which tend to be far larger than any reasonable definition of a metropolitan area. Nearly all of China is divided into cities, in the same way that most of the United States is divided into counties.

These Chinese “cities” themselves often contain county level “cities” that are separate from the principal urban areas.

These differing definitions of municipalities make any international comparison of these entities difficult and often misleading. The ville de Paris represents barely 20 percent of the [Paris](#) region. The “city” of Atlanta represents barely 10 percent of its metropolitan area. The “city” of Melbourne represents only 5 percent of its metropolitan area. Yet, other “cities” are larger than their metropolitan areas, such as Chongqing, China, which has at least five times the population of its genuine metropolitan area (the “city” covers an area the size of Austria or Indiana). The city of San Antonio, with its vast stretches of suburbanization is surely not comparable to the city of Hartford, which is dominated by an urban core.

Any genuine comparison of “cities” must be at the metropolitan area or urban area level. These definitions both represent the city as the organism it is, rather than simply the happenstance of municipal boundaries. Of course, comparisons must be either between metropolitan areas or urban areas to be valid. It will not do to compare metropolitan areas with urban areas; they are as apples and oranges. Moreover, there are no international standards for delineation of metropolitan areas, which makes metropolitan comparisons more complex.

[Description of the Series](#)

[The Megacity Book](#)

[World Urban Areas: Population & Density of All Urban Areas over 500,000](#)

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Urban Expansion

